

Message Text

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21

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FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1827

INFO AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

UNCLAS ABU DHABI 0956

DEPT PASS INTERIOR AND AID

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: TECH EAGR TC US

SUBJ: UAE RULER MEETS WITH USG DAM EXPERTS

REF: ABU DHABI 485 AND OTHERS

SUMMARY:

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION EXPERTS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED WITH GREAT INTEREST BY LOCAL OFFICIALS AND UAE GOVERNMENT IS PROVIDING FULL SUPPORT IN THEIR WORK. THEIR SURVEY OF POSSIBLE DAM SITES IN THE UAE WILL TAKE ABOUT TEN DAYS AND BEFORE RETURNING TO THE US, THEY WILL MAKE A PRELIMINARY REPORT TO UAE PRESIDENT ZAYID. EMBASSY STRONGLY RECOMMENDS THAT THIS TEAM'S FINAL REPORT BE ISSUED AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE AND THAT THE REPORT BE PRESENTED AND EXPLAINED TO THE RULER BY A BUREAU OFFICIAL IN PERSON.

1. BUREAU OF RECLAMATION (BUREC) EXPERTS SCHERICH AND PAMBERTON ACCOMPANIED BY EMBASSY ECON OFFICER MET WITH UAE PRESIDENT SHAIKH ZAYID AT AL-AIN ON JULY 19. DURING THE MEETING, ZAYID AND US TEAM DISCUSSED IN GENERAL WAY POSSIBILITY OF CONSERVING RUN-OFF WATER FROM THE OMAN-UAE MOUNTAINS TO INCREASE THE WATER SUPPLY OF THE AGRICULTURAL AREAS ON THE ARID, WESTERN SIDE OF THIS RANGE. SCHERICH AND PAMBERTON PLANNING TO TAKE TEN DAYS TO MAKE PRELIMINARY SURVEY OF POSSIBLE DAM SITES IN AREA FROM BUREIMI NORTH TO RAS AL-KHAIMAH. FOLLOWING

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THEIR SURVEY, THEY WILL PRESENT PRELIMINARY FINDINGS TO UAE RULER.

2. ZAYID WAS VERY PLEASED WITH USG'S RESPONSE TO HIS REQUEST AND HAS PROMISED ALL NECESSARY LOGISTICAL SUPPORT FOR THE SURVEY, INCLUDING MAPS, LAND ROVERS, AND HELICOPTERS. HE HAS GREAT PERSONAL INTEREST IN AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN GENERAL AND IN DAMS AND WATER CONSERVATION IN PARTICULAR. DURING HIS MEETING WITH BUREC TEAM HE EMPHASIZED THIS WAS FIRST DIRECT USG TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO THE UAE AND HE HAS HOPES FOR OUTSTANDING RESULTS. AS A MEASURE OF HIS INTEREST, THIS PROJECT IS BEING RUN UNDER DIRECT SUPERVISION OF RULER'S OFFICE WITH LITTLE OR NO INVOLVEMENT OF FOREIGN MINISTRY OR UAE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE. THE SAME DAY, THE TEAM MET WITH SHAIKH TAHNOUN, COUSIN OF ZAYID AND HIS PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE IN THE AL-AIN REGION, TO WORK OUT THE DETAILS OF SCHEDULING AND TRANSPORT. HE HAS ARRANGED FULL LOGISTICAL SUPPORT TO ENABLE THE TEAM TO MAKE AS COMPLETE A SURVEY AS POSSIBLE.

3. COMMENT: UAEG AUTHORITIES ARE MAKING EXTRAORDINARY EFFORTS TO SUPPORT BUREC TEAM. ZAYID'S OBVIOUS INTEREST IN GROUP'S WORK COMES FROM HIS OWN DEEP PERSONAL COMMITMENT TO AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN UAE. BEYOND THAT, HE IS ESPECIALLY PLEASED WITH THE PROFESSIONAL, NON-COMMERCIAL NATURE OF THIS TEAM. UNLIKE MOST OF ZAYID'S VISITORS THE BUREC GROUP IS NEITHER PEDDLING ANYTHING NOR IN SOME OTHER MANNER IS IT TRYING TO RELIEVE THE UAE OF SOME OF ITS SURPLUS FUNDS.

4. COMMENT: EMBASSY MOST APPRECIATIVE OF BUREC'S RAPID ACTION IN SENDING SCHERICH AND PEMBERTON. THEIR PROMPT ARRIVAL AND THEIR OBVIOUS ENTHUSIASM TO HELP THE UAE HAVE PROVIDED A MOST AUSPICIOUS BEGINNING TO A RE-IMBURSABLE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM. EMBASSY EMPHATICALLY RECOMMENDS BUREC PAY SPECIAL ATTENTION TO PROMPT, PERSONAL FOLLOW-UP TO TEAM'S PRELIMINARY FINDINGS. SUGGEST THAT TEAM'S FINAL REPORT BE COMPLETED AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE WHILE IDEA IS STILL FRESH IN ZAYID'S MIND AND THAT IT BE PRESENTED TO RULER IN PERSON RPT IN PERSON BY ONE OR BOTH OF TEAM MEMBERS. IF REPORT SIMPLY SENT TO RULER OR FORWARDED VIA EMBASSY IT MAY JOIN STACKS OF OTHER REPORTS GATHERING DUST IN UAEG OFFICES, WHERE IT WILL REMAIN UNREAD AND IGNORED UNTIL SOMEONE ASKS FOR ANOTHER STUDY YEARS LATER.

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5. FYI: EMBASSY HAS JUST LEARNED OF US DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR STUDY OF WATER AND TREES BETWEEN ABU DHABI AND AL-AIN MADE IN SEPTEMBER 1973. REPORT OF THIS STUDY HAS STILL NOT BEEN RECEIVED. SUCH DELAYS DISSIPATE THE VALUE OF HIGH-QUALITY EXPERT WORK, SINCE LOCAL OFFICIALS WILL LOSE INTEREST OR SIMPLY FORGET ABOUT A PROJECT DURING THE YEAR BETWEEN STUDY

AND REPORT. AS FAR AS EMBASSY COULD DISCOVER, NO ONE IN
ABU DHABI GOVERNMENT REMEMBERS EXISTENCE OF SUCH A STUDY.
PERHAPS LATE ARRIVAL OF REPORT WOULD BE BETTER THAN NO
ARRIVAL AT ALL, BUT AN EARLIER DELIVERY WOULD CERTAINLY MAKE
FOR A MORE EFFECTIVE PRESENTATION. END FYI.
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